

HOW TO START A YFL LOCAL CHAPTER

NFFE-IAM members of all ages, at locals both large and small, have spent the last year working to fulfill our Union's commitment to recruit, engage, and empower a new generation of unionists. With your unwavering support, the Young Federal Leaders (YFL) initiative has been successful in creating a sound infrastructure and a myriad of tools to cultivate our Union's young worker community.

But the work of investing in our young members and preparing for our Union's future is far from done. The most important step in ensuring YFL makes good on its promise to provide education, mentorship, and leadership opportunities for our young members is to create a Local chapter.

Local chapters are the lifeblood of the Young Federal Leaders initiative. By starting one today, your local can translate the enthusiasm of its young workers into a powerful tool to strengthen our Union and ensure its success for future generations to come. The steps below will help get you started.

1. **Be Creative** – The steps you'll find here are by no means exhaustive. Rather, we hope this document will provide a loose set of guidelines to establish your local's YFL chapter. No two chapters are alike – you have the freedom to develop unique ways of connecting with the young workers in your bargaining unit. Some chapters have incentivized participation by awarding one young member per month a certificate of achievement and a free lunch with the Union president. Others host monthly happy hour events for young members to get to know each other better and discuss issues happening at the agency. One chapter goes into high schools within the community and teaches students about Unions and why they are important to our country. The list could go on and on. Use some of these ideas to get started, but feel free to develop your own means of connecting with the young workers at your local.
2. **Get Started** – Starting a chapter is easy; young members who are interested in leading a YFL chapter should first approach their local leadership or bring up the idea at their next monthly Union meeting. For local leaders who would like to develop a YFL chapter, simply appoint an engaged young person within the Local to head up the effort. Once you've identified a young person to chair your Local's YFL chapter, let the national office know. We want to help our Locals get started, and we can't do it if we don't know they exist.
3. **Solicit Participants** – Send an email to your bargaining unit to let them know your Local is forming a YFL chapter. Let them know you're looking for young members who are interested in serving, and communicate that the chapter will provide social, educational, leadership, and mentorship opportunities for its participants.
4. **Communicate** – Create a contact list with all of the individuals who communicated initial interest. Send an email out to schedule your first YFL Local chapter meeting. Once you've established a reliable means of reaching out to the young workers at your Local, communicate regularly with your chapter about YFL social events, educational or mentorship opportunities, and any pertinent agency messages.
5. **Be Visible** – Request YFL flyers and signs from the National Office. All materials are free of charge to NFFE Locals. Young workers often feel they don't have a place or won't fit in at the

Local. If they see other energized and enthusiastic young people and know there is a program that caters to their interests, they'll be more likely to get involved.

6. **Hold Meetings** – Schedule monthly meetings to develop your YFL chapter's agenda. It's often convenient to hold meetings either before or after your Local's monthly Union meetings. The chair is responsible for hosting the meeting, conducting votes, and ensuring notes are kept to reflect current and future plans. Meetings don't have to be held on site; your Local chapter meetings can take place anywhere, including restaurants, bars, or someone's home – these gatherings should be social and fun!
7. **Have Fun!** – Young workers are serious about their careers but they're also looking for opportunities to get to know their co-workers and have fun. Schedule social events outside of the workplace to build a strong bond and foster solidarity. Some YFL Local chapters have hosted happy hours, planned community service events, and joined intramural sports teams.
8. **Welcome New Employees** – Many young workers who are new to the agency don't know what a Union is, how they operate, or why they are important. By meeting with these employees early, the Union has an opportunity to educate them about the importance of joining. Assign one young person from your Local chapter to attend all new employee orientations and talk about the opportunities for young people in the Union.
9. **Get Educated** – NFFE is extremely fortunate to utilize the IAM's Winpisinger Education and Technology Center in Hollywood, MD. Young members can spend a week in the classroom with experienced professors learning how to become a better unionist, at no cost to them. YFL Local chapters should ensure all participants are kept up to date on the class schedule and have opportunities to attend classes regularly. The Federal Basic class, as well as Leadership I are great introductory courses for young members. Consider sending a young member to class with a more experienced unionist and encourage them to work together when they get home to implement what they've learned.
10. **Learn from a Mentor** – NFFE has some of the most dedicated and experienced representatives in the labor movement today. However, as the workforce ages and a new generation of leaders takes the reins, we risk losing the decades of institutional knowledge that have helped make our Union great. YFL Local chapters can play a key role in ensuring young members have opportunities to learn from experienced unionists within the Local. Work with your Local's leadership to identify members who are interested in serving as mentors. Mentorship relationships don't have to be formal, the idea is to pass on Union knowledge and provide learning opportunities for young members.

As you begin to get your Local chapter up and running let the National Office know about your successes. We want our membership to know about the fantastic work our young unionists are doing to make NFFE strong, and we plan to publicize your chapter's accomplishments.